

PURVIEW OF BLR&D and CSR&D MERIT REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEES

1. ACRONYMS FOR SUBCOMMITTEES

- a. AGCG = Aging and Clinical Geriatrics
- b. CARD = Cardiovascular Studies
- c. CLIN = Clinical Research Program
- d. ENDO = Endocrinology
- e. EPID = Epidemiology Research Program
- f. GAST = Gastroenterology
- g. GMED = General Medical Science
- h. HEMA = Hematology
- i. IMMU = Immunology and Dermatology
- j. INDI = Infectious Diseases
- k. MHBS = Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences
- l. NEUA = Neurobiology A
- m. NEUB = Neurobiology B
- n. NEUC = Neurobiology C
- o. NEUD/E = Neurobiology D/E
- p. NEPH = Nephrology
- q. ONCO = Oncology
- r. RESP = Respiration
- s. SURG = Surgery

2. SUBCOMMITTEES

In any given review cycle, a Subcommittee may be further divided into panels depending upon the total number and scope of proposals received.

a. **Aging And Clinical Geriatrics (AGCG)**. The AGCG Subcommittee reviews proposals on the physiologic aspects of the aging process and on the management and clinical aspects of diseases highly prevalent in the elderly. Studies on disease prevention in the elderly including vaccination, nutrition, exercise physiology, and behavioral modification are also reviewed. Specific geriatric syndromes that are reviewed include incontinence, constipation, falls, gait and balance disorders, and frailty. Other areas include pharmacology and pharmacokinetics in the elderly, osteoarthritis in the elderly, management of dementia and depression, and sleep disorders unique to the elderly.

b. **Cardiovascular Studies (CARD)**. The CARD Subcommittee reviews proposals on the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and disorders of the heart and vascular system. This Subcommittee reviews studies on the etiology and pathogenesis of idiopathic hypertension while the NEPH Subcommittee reviews nephrogenic hypertension and ENDO reviews endocrine hypertension. Neurobiology Subcommittees review studies of innervation and neural control of the heart. The PSBD Subcommittee reviews behavioral control of hemodynamics and cardiac performance.

c. **Clinical Research Program (CLIN)**. The CLIN Subcommittee reviews single-site or small multi-site clinical trials designed to assess the potential effects of therapeutic interventions on intermediate physiological measures or studies aimed at definitive clinical outcomes. Proposals reviewed in CLIN are focused on clinical outcomes in human subjects and require special attention to human studies concerns including safety issues, appropriate populations, and adequate statistical power to obtain meaningful results.

d. **Endocrinology (ENDO)**. The ENDO Subcommittee reviews applications on the biology, physiology, molecular biology, and genetics of regulation of all endocrine organs and their products (e.g., insulin, glucagon, corticosteroids, and sex hormones). The etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases associated with endocrine abnormalities (e.g., diabetes, Cushing's syndrome, hyperthyroidism, and obesity) and bone and mineral metabolism (cell biology of bone formation and resorption, osteoporosis, vitamin D and calcium studies) are also reviewed.

e. **Epidemiology Research Program (EPID)**. The EPID Subcommittee reviews applications that employ a population based approach in design and methodology, and investigate the prevalence, etiology, and risk factors of diseases and disorders affecting veterans. This Subcommittee also reviews applications that assess the efficacy of modern diagnostic, treatment, and preventive strategies.

f. **Gastroenterology (GAST)**. The GAST Subcommittee reviews applications on the biology and physiology of the gastrointestinal (GI) system and associated organs such as liver, spleen, gallbladder, and pancreas. Studies on GI motility, regulation of GI secretion, digestion, nutrition, and absorption are examples. This Subcommittee also reviews studies focusing on the etiology, pathophysiology, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases of the GI system and on target organ damage. Also reviewed are studies assessing the effects on GI function produced by immunologic, infectious, toxic, or carcinogenic agents.

g. **General Medical Science (GMED)**. The GMED Subcommittee reviews proposals on cellular or molecular biology, biochemistry, biophysics, or genetics that are not restricted to a particular disease process or organ system. *NOTE: Basic science approaches that relate to a particular organ system may be reviewed by the appropriate organ system Subcommittee.*

h. **Hematology (HEMA)**. The HEMA Subcommittee reviews proposals on the physiology of the cellular and non-cellular constituents of blood. The processes of hemostasis, thrombosis, blood coagulation, cell adhesion, hemocompatibility, hematopoiesis, and fibrinolysis are examples. Studies on the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment of blood diseases such as leukemia, lymphoma, anemia, and thrombocytopenia are reviewed. Studies on normal and abnormal macrophage, platelet, and neutrophil functions are also reviewed.

i. **Immunology and Dermatology (IMMU)**. The IMMU Subcommittee reviews proposals on the basic immunologic mechanisms involved in functions of the immune system. Studies on the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment of autoimmune disease, immunodeficiency, immune-complex disorders, and diseases related to allergic or delayed hypersensitivity reactions are also reviewed. This Subcommittee reviews proposals on immunopharmacology, immunogenetics, and dermatological disorders of immunologic or unknown etiology, and immunology of organ transplantation. The ONCO Subcommittee reviews immunotherapy of cancer and tumor immunology. The INDI Subcommittee reviews the immune response to specific infectious agents and vaccine development.

j. **Infectious Diseases (INDI)**. The INDI Subcommittee reviews proposals on the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment of infectious diseases of man and relevant animal infection models. Areas of investigation include pathogenic mechanisms, host-defense mechanisms, immune responses to specific infectious agents, life cycles of the infectious agent, anti-microbial drug therapies, and vaccine development. The IMMU Subcommittee reviews studies on basic immunologic mechanisms that relate to all classes of infectious agents. The appropriate organ or system Subcommittee reviews studies on organ pathology associated with an infectious agent.

k. **Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences (MHBS)**. MHBS reviews studies of the etiology, pathobiology, diagnosis and treatment of psychiatric, behavioral (including addictive and craving) disorders in humans including the psychoses, mood disorders, anxiety, panic and post-traumatic stress disorder, alcoholism and drug abuse. Sleep disorders as they relate to mood or cognitive function are reviewed by this panel while respiratory aspects are reviewed by the RESP subcommittee. Treatment trials are currently reviewed by the clinical

studies program. The aging and clinical geriatrics subcommittee may review studies on management of dementia.

Neurobiology. The Neurobiology Subcommittee reviews proposals on the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases of the central and peripheral nervous systems utilizing *in vitro* and non-human *in vivo* models. This subcommittee will be subdivided into Neurobiology A (NEUA), Neurobiology B (NEUB), Neurobiology C (NEUC), Neurobiology D (NEUD) and/or Neurobiology E (NEUE), depending on the number and scope of proposals received in any given review cycle. The Neurobiology Subcommittees will review proposals utilizing *in vitro* and non-human *in vivo* models.

Topics reviewed by the Neurobiology Subcommittees **may** be divided as follows:

l. NEUA reviews studies involving *in vitro* and *in vivo* nonhuman models of psychiatric, behavioral and addictive disorders, analgesia and anesthesia. This subcommittee reviews studies of postmortem tissue from psychiatric patients, behavioral chronobiology, neurobiology and neuropharmacology of psychoactive or neurotoxicological agents.

m. NEUB reviews studies involving sleep, epilepsy, and/or neuronal plasticity.

n. NEUC reviews studies of injury and trauma to the central nervous system, including spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, stroke, intracerebral and subarachnoid hemorrhage, and the effects of ablation or pressure on neuronal function caused by CNS tumors. This subcommittee also reviews studies of injury and trauma to the peripheral nervous system, such as peripheral or diabetic neuropathies. NEUC reviews studies on demyelinating disorders such as multiple sclerosis, as well as neuromuscular disorders that are primarily neurologic or muscular, or involve the neuromuscular junction. Studies on the anatomical, biochemical, and/or molecular basis of pain may also be reviewed. NEUC may also review studies involving sensory disorders of vision, taste, hearing, and smell.

o. NEUD and NEUE review studies of neurodegeneration including Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimer's Disease, upper and lower motor neuron disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and Huntington's Disease.

Neuroendocrinological studies focusing on hypothalamic releasing factors, anterior or posterior pituitary hormones, or peripheral hormones such as cortisol will be reviewed by ENDO. Studies on neoplasms occurring in the nervous system will be reviewed by ONCO, whereas studies on surgical approaches to resecting CNS tumors will be reviewed by SURG. Functional imaging will be reviewed by MHBS.

p. Nephrology (NEPH). The NEPH Subcommittee reviews proposals on the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and disorders of the kidney. This Subcommittee reviews studies on end stage renal disease including peritoneal dialysis and renal function following transplantation. The ONCO Subcommittee reviews studies on carcinomas in the kidney. The SURG Subcommittee reviews studies on the surgical approaches to disorders of the kidney and genitourinary tract.

q. **Oncology (ONCO)**. The ONCO Subcommittee reviews proposals on the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment of various malignant conditions. Studies focusing on aspects of the oncologic process including cancer initiation, promotion, progression, and metastasis are reviewed, as are aspects of therapy including chemotherapy, radiation therapy, immunotherapy, and gene therapy. The Subcommittee also reviews proposals focusing on premalignant conditions. The effect of solid tumors on a specific organ or system's function is reviewed by the appropriate organ Subcommittee. SURG reviews surgical management of solid tumors.

r. **Respiration (RESP)**. The RESP Subcommittee reviews proposals on the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and disorders of the lung. Respiratory aspects of sleep disorders (sleep apnea), the effects of immunologic, infectious, carcinogenic, or toxic insults on the lung, and the effects of transplantation on pulmonary function are also reviewed.

s. **Surgery (SURG)**. The SURG Subcommittee reviews proposals on the surgical aspects of cardiac, thoracic, orthopedic, vascular, pulmonary, gastrointestinal, renal, and genitourinary tract disorders. Complications of major surgery such as hemostasis, altered immunity, secondary infection, sepsis, multi-organ failure, and reperfusion injury are reviewed. The SURG Subcommittee reviews all aspects of physical trauma, wound healing, surgical nutrition, and burn treatment. This Subcommittee reviews studies on surgical aspects of organ transplantation, organ transplant survival, and immuno-suppressive therapy. Surgical approaches to peripheral and central nervous system lesions, and reconstructive surgery, ophthalmological, head and neck, ear, nose, and throat disorders are also reviewed. This Subcommittee also reviews studies of impotence, dental studies including dental trauma and prostheses, and structural and neoplastic disorders of the oral cavity. The INDI Subcommittee reviews microbiological aspects of dental and periodontal disease. The IMMU Subcommittee reviews immunologic aspects of organ transplantation.